

from the neighborhood of the circle lest they should run against any of those who have fallen into a trance and thus awaken them. The dancers themselves are careful not to disturb the trance subjects while their souls are in the spirit world. Full Indian dress is worn, with buckskin, paint and feathers, but among the Sioux the women discarded the belts ornamented with disks of German silver because the metal had come from the white man. Among the southern tribes, on the contrary, hats were sometimes worn in the dance, although this was not considered in strict accordance with the doctrine.

No drum, rattle or other musical instrument is used in the dance, excepting sometimes by an individual dancer in imitation of a trance vision. In this respect particularly, the Ghost dance differs from every other Indian dance. Neither are any fires ever built within the circle, so far as known, with any tribe excepting the Walapai. The northern Cheyenne, however, built four fires in a peculiar fashion outside of the circle, as already described. With most tribes the dance was performed around a tree or pole planted in the center and variously decorated. In the southern plains, however, only the Kiowa seem ever to have followed this method, they sometimes dancing around a cedar tree. On breaking the circle at the end of the dance the performers shook their blankets or shawls in the air, with the idea of driving away all evil influences. On later instructions from the Messiah all then went down to bathe in the stream, the men in one place and the women in another, before going to their tepees. The idea of washing away evil things, spiritual as well as earthly, by bathing in running water, is too natural and universal to need comment.

The peculiar ceremonies of prayer and invocation, with the laying on of hands and the stroking of the face and

body, have several times been described, and need only be mentioned here. As trance visions became frequent, the subjects strove to imitate what they had seen in the spirit world, especially where they had taken part with their departed friends in some of the old-time games. In this way gaming wheels, shinny sticks, hummers and other toys or implements would be made and carried in future dances, accompanied with appropriate songs, until the dance sometimes took on the appearance of an exhibition of Indian curios on a small scale.

"It Might Have Been."

It might have been! Oh, saddest words of all.
We dream and dream of scenes beyond recall.
Sad thoughts will come, and burning tears will fall.
For "might have been."

Oh, could we live our lives all o'er again!
Could we forget the present with the pain
Of thoughts that are unspo'ed! All in vain.
It might have been.

It might have been. O words of wild regret;
Sorrow for vanished hours, and yet—ah, yet—
Would we, if e'en we could, forget forget
What might have been?

Ah, well! perchance for all some sweet hope lies
Buried deeply, maybe, from human eyes,
And none but God may ever hear our sighs
O'er "might have been."

God knoweth best; and though our tears fast fall,
Though none beside may know, he knoweth all,
All that is sad and lost beyond recall—
The "might have been."

A bitter word dropped from our lips against a brother is like a pistol fired among mountains. The sharp report is caught up and intensified and echoed by rocks and caves until it is like thunder. So an unkind word, in passing from mouth to mouth, receives progressive exaggerations, and now, ball-like, increases as it rolls.